

Industry-Led Solutions

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A National Strategy

- Assist producers in addressing CWA issues
- Current EPA top down inspection-based regulatory approach may not work
- Current USDA voluntary programs may not work

The Clean Water Act

In 1972, Congress instituted the NPDES program for point source pollution

- Removed pressure to develop the science to support ambient standards-based programs
- Focus now shifting to the use of TMDLs

Institutional System

- USDA programs designed under the New Deal—government ran from the “cabinet” to the “county”
- EPA programs developed under the banner of cooperative federalism—states as the primary implementing agencies

Purpose

A proactive approach to ensure effective, scientifically sound water quality policies that meet the unique needs of agriculture and maintain the economic viability of the industry.

Industry-Led Solutions I

January 2000

- National dairy leaders
- USDA—NRCS
- U.S. EPA
- Environmental groups
(observer/participants)

Industry-Led Solutions II

January 2001

- National dairy leaders
- Beef/sheep
- Pork
- Poultry and egg

Industry-Led Solutions III

November 2002

- National livestock leaders
- Row crop agriculture
- The fertilizer industry
- “Corporate friends of agriculture”

Recommendations

1. Develop an environmental certification program for agriculture
2. Invest in the science to support results based policy programs
3. Develop a constituency to support new programs

Certification Program Components

- A comprehensive and objective assessment of water quality risk factors
- Development of a CNMP, EMS, or certification under ISO 14000
- A third-party audit to provide transparency while respecting the need for confidentiality

Investing in the science

Science must drive environmental policy. Some important science related issues:

- Measuring the success of nonpoint source programs
- Developing monitoring systems to measure progress and success

Investing in the science

- Examining how land-use and land-management activities impact water quality
- Examining the science upon which water quality standards are based

Developing a constituency

Workshop participants supported the creation of a federal commission or committee comprised of members that represent the type of broad-based constituency needed to pass legislation and secure funding.

Developing a constituency

The commission would be charged with:

- Developing a results-oriented environmental stewardship program for agriculture
- Establishing scientific research priorities

Developing a constituency

- Developing reasonable measures by which the industry can be held accountable
- Identifying ways to enhance industry sustainability and profitability

ILS: Gulf of Mexico

November 2003

Application of the Industry-Led
Solutions methodology to a regional
issue

- Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico
- The role of agricultural producers
- Provide for a coordinated effort in addressing the challenge

Participants

- Agricultural producers
- State conservationists
- Regional EPA representatives
- Environmental interests
- Point source representative
- Other agriculture related interests

Ten principles for environmental stewardship

- Resolving environmental challenges
- Tools for resolving environmental challenges

Resolving environmental challenges

- Solutions must start at the local level
- Producers will embrace practices that are economically feasible
- Common sense goals that are achievable

Resolving environmental challenges

- Mature policy and marketplace at the same time
- Communicate progress and success

Tools for resolving environmental challenges

- More data for baselines and assessments
- Flexibility in solving problems
- New tools and innovation

Tools for resolving environmental challenges

- Organizing and accessing information
- Partnerships based upon leadership and relationships

Actions items

- Establish a federal commission on agriculture and the environment
- Establish environmental baselines
- Prepare a concept paper

Shreveport meeting

- Mission statement
- Concept paper
- PowerPoint

ILS: Gulf of Mexico II

- June 2004
- Expand to include municipalities and industry